

Dear Honorable Members,

My name is Keith Golnik, I am a resident of the Town of Plymouth and I am a holder of a Connecticut Permit to Carry pistols and revolvers, a New Hampshire Permit to carry a concealed Pistol or Revolver, and a Florida concealed weapons license. Through these three permits I am licensed to carry a pistol or revolver in 34 states. I might add that states such as Pennsylvania, Vermont, Alaska, Virginia, North Carolina, New Hampshire, and Arizona (just to name a few) require no license or permission from the Government to openly carry a loaded firearm. In Vermont no permits or licenses required for any form of carry. Currently there are four states (Texas, South Carolina, Oklahoma, and Arkansas) that ban the open carry of handguns and that have legislation pending to allow it. Connecticut is the ONLY state in the country with pending legislation to criminalize that which is already legal.

For many years the Connecticut State Police in cooperation with the Board of Firearms and Permit Examiners (BFPE) and local municipalities have allowed the use of an unlawful-scheme to intimidate Permit Holders. They have treated individuals as criminals for the accidental exposure of their firearm. In at least one case recently a local police department, unlawfully arrested an individual for Breach Of The Peace in the 2nd degree for the accidental exposure of his firearm while waiting for an order of food at a restaurant. The officers cited for their authority the frequently asked questions section of the State of Connecticut Board of Firearms Permit Examiners website that stated:

“Mature judgment dictates that every effort should be made to ensure that no gun is exposed to view or carried in any manner that would tend to alarm people who see it.”

This was not and is not the law. This was and continues to be an attempt to create and enforce non-existent law to the detriment of the states citizens.

I get alarmed and annoyed when I see a person on a motorcycle without a helmet and surely mature judgment would dictate that a person should wear a helmet. But does that give me the right to have a motorcyclist arrested on those grounds? Can I have a woman arrested for breast feeding a baby in public?

Of course the answer to these questions is no. Luckily in this individual's case a judge saw fit to dismiss the charges, but this individual still ended up having his state permit revoked.

At its December 2007 meeting the BFPE voted to remove this language from its website because there was no legal basis for the statement. However, as recently as July 7th, 2008 Detective Karanda of the State Police Special Licensing and Firearms Unit stated in an email that:

“The issue remains that this is not an open carry state. There are instances where the open carry of a firearm may lead to others being inconvenienced, annoyed or alarmed by the presence of an openly carried firearm. We believe that the firearm being concealed will allow the permit holder to carry a firearm but still assure the other members of the public from being exposed to the firearm which they may not be comfortable around.”

At the request of the Department Of Public Safety you have before you proposed legislation that would mandate that a hand gun be carried concealed. This is nothing more than an attempt to cover up the failure of Department of Public Safety to faithfully enforce existing state law. Much like the suitability clause in section 29-28 of the state statute relating to who is allowed to carry a pistol or revolver, there is no language in this bill that defines what concealed means. In the State of Mississippi a weapon is considered concealed even if partially concealed as is the case when wearing one in a holster. Would someone that saw the outline of a gun through my shirt or the partial bit of a holster sticking out from under my jacket be able to have me arrested for an otherwise lawful act? If I carried my gun in a belt holster that had a flap covering the grip such as the ones used during WWII would that suffice for being concealed? Would I then have the fear of the revocation of my permit and need to wait for two years for the opportunity to appeal the revocation? Can you guarantee my personal safety and security during the time that I will need to go unarmed and defenseless? Are you aware that the police have no duty to protect an individual citizen? The only one that is responsible for protecting me is me.

I quote for you two sections from the Connecticut State Constitution

Article One Section 1:

"All men when they form a social compact are equal in rights; and no man or set of men are entitled to exclusive public emoluments or privileges from the community."

Article One Section 15 states:

"Every citizen has a right to bear arms in defense of himself and the state."

I oppose this Bill and I request that you do the same.

Sincerely,

Keith G. Golnik
46 Orchard St.
Terryville, CT
06786